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## The Hope of Universal Peace.

A friend writes us in reference to the present condition of the world and the outlook for peace: "Its claims can only be accepted by faith. Reason has proved of no value in its support. To hope for it requires the heavenly gift of faith; for no human sign of progress is conclusive in its favor. Its real votaries form perhaps the smallest righteous minority upon our planet."

This comes near to being a cry of despair. There is still faith, but it is faith completely enveloped in darkness, without eyes, without any vision of coming light—a faith which it is impossible for any one to maintain long.

Is such an attitude of mind justifiable? We think not. There is, unquestionably, much to create such a state of mind, if one looks only, or too exclusively, at the confused surface of things. The time has not come when faith can be replaced by sight. There are many dark clouds that one must look through. Militarism, as an organized institution, was never stronger than it is to-day, never more thoroughly entrenched in the plans of governments. It was never before so greedy, so aggressive, so determined to subdue all things unto itself. Wars and rumors of wars still come,—merciless, bloody, horrible. They come where they are not expected, and in most unlooked-for ways. Preparations for war—monstrous implements of destruction and huge armies of men—are nervously pushed forward, with a blind disregard of cost which would have terrified even Napoleon. Such is the seeming state of the world that only those with the sternest loyalty to duty, the profoundest faith in God and man, in the triumph of reason and goodness, can at times stand up against the pressure of the storm which rages about them.

But the real state of the world is more than the seeming. The storm, we feel sure, is a passing, not a rising storm. To our reading, there are many "human signs of progress" conclusive in favor of the early coming of universal and perpetual peace. So sure are we of this that we are willing to put our all into the cause and take chances with the hope. However furious the torrent of militarism, many of the sources which have supplied it are already drying up. It is a mountain stream impetuous below, but no longer fed by the springs in the hills. Private war is gone. Personal fights and the duel have nearly disappeared. The practice of carrying deadly weapons is out of date. The number of people to whom war is synonymous with glory is vastly less than formerly. What is done in war can no longer be done in civil society, as it formerly was, without the utter condemnation of the social conscience and punishment with social outlawry. Law has taken the place of violence in the internal affairs of nearly all countries. This is what we

mean by the fountains of war drying up. War was once universal—personal, civil, international. It is no longer so. Personal or private war is gone, civil war is nearly gone, international war alone remains in strength. These "human signs" are perfectly conclusive to a mind which reads by generations and not by years.

But this is not all. Commerce has grown in thirty years more than it had grown in any hundred years previously, and commerce is confessedly the pronounced foe of war. Organized labor,—the union of laboring men throughout the world,—is everywhere uttering its protest against war. Women are organizing against war, by *hundreds of thousands*, in the W. C. T. U., in the Woman's Disarmament League, in Women's Clubs and elsewhere. What does all this mean? These are objects of sight and not of faith only.

There are other signs, even more conclusive than these. The general growth of intelligence, of conscience and of tenderness, is perhaps the greatest of all. War is the business of barbarians and ignoramuses, and it cannot long survive the general intelligence and humaneness which are swiftly covering the earth. Both rulers and peoples dread war to-day as it was never dreaded in the ages gone by. Why? Because it is so irrational; because it destroys happiness and its resources; because it involves such tremendous risks to every interest; because it imposes such vast burdens upon life. Men love life, and want to "see good days"—some in a lower, some in a higher sense. Therefore they detest war, an increasing multitude of them. This great sign in favor of "the coming peace" ought not to escape the attention of any one.

"The smallest righteous minority upon our planet" is not an expression which at all adequately describes the circle of the real friends of peace. They are no longer, if they ever were, an insignificant lot of people huddling together in secret, ashamed of their principles, fearing to let their voices be heard openly. They have become so numerous and so aggressive that they have made their hobby the common talk of the world. The clamor of recent war has not been able to drown their voices. Their faith has held, their numbers increased, their influence strengthened itself, in spite of the Hispano-American war, the campaign of blood in the Soudan, and the snappings and snarlings of Great Britain and France at each other, across the channel. The Czar of Russia has openly confessed that he was moved in part to his great pronunciamento by the utterances of the Peace Congress at Buda-Pesth, two years and more ago—a Congress representing four hundred organizations of peace workers in no less than fifteen countries.

This "righteous minority" which year after year shows its faith by its works, is so sure of its ground that it is eagerly and incessantly pressing its propaganda in every country where civilization has a name—in the press, in the pulpit, on the rostrum, in parliament, in the home, in the school. No war can any more break out, or even threaten, without their raising their united voice in protest. They dare to tell the most powerful governments, the most imperious sovereigns, that they have no right to hurl their subjects against each other in mutual slaughter, that there is a rational and humane way of settling disputes between rational beings, and that it is their business to provide it. They are creating a world conscience, an august moral tribunal of humanity at whose bench all war-makers are even now compelled to appear and defend themselves against the most serious charges ever brought against wrong-doers. This "righteous minority" has already grown large enough to be very troublesome, and before the public sentiment which it, with other agencies, is rapidly creating there can be but one fate for war—destruction.

If all roads lead to Rome, all the real processes of the civilization in which we rejoice are running straight to a common center, the peace of the world. So if we hear of wars and rumors of wars, let us not fail to read the true signs of the times.

## "Its Whole Past, its Whole Future."

No speech has been delivered in this country, since the period just prior to and including the Civil War, which begins to compare in strength and importance with that made in the Senate on January 9th by Senator Hoar against imperialistic expansion. The occasion which called forth the speech was, is one of the gravest and most critical through which the country has ever passed. The question at issue is no less than whether the nation, in the whirlwind of temptation in which it has been caught, shall abandon the principles on which it is founded, and, for the sake of increasing its territory and showing its hand of force among the armed powers, adopt ideas and methods of expansion and government which are in principle despotic, which have been condemned by our whole national history, and away from which all Christian civilization is moving. Shall the nation continue to advance, to stand for the essential and everlasting principles of all prog-